



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 7272

January Session, 2007

* HB07272GAE__051607__ *

AN ACT CONCERNING A STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN CONNECTICUT.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2007*) (a) There is established a
2 Blue Ribbon Commission to develop and implement a strategic master
3 plan for higher education in Connecticut.

4 (1) The commission shall consist of the following voting members:
5 (A) Two members appointed by the speaker of the House of
6 Representatives, who shall have experience as former administrators
7 in independent institutions of higher education in this state; (B) two
8 members appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of
9 whom shall be a former administrator of a regional community-
10 technical college and one of whom shall be a former administrator of
11 The University of Connecticut; (C) two members appointed by the
12 majority leader of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be
13 a former administrator of a state university in the Connecticut State
14 University system and one of whom shall be a former administrator of
15 Charter Oak State College; (D) two members appointed by the majority
16 leader of the Senate, one of whom shall have experience in the field of
17 arts and culture and one of whom shall have experience in the field of
18 health care; (E) two members appointed by the minority leader of the
19 House of Representatives who shall have knowledge and expertise in

20 science and technology; (F) two members appointed by the minority
21 leader of the Senate who shall represent state-wide business
22 organizations; and (G) three members appointed by the Governor, one
23 of whom shall represent a nonprofit education foundation, one of
24 whom shall have experience in university research and its commercial
25 application and one of whom shall have experience in the field of
26 education from prekindergarten to grade twelve, inclusive. The
27 commission membership shall reflect the state's geographic, racial and
28 ethnic diversity.

29 (2) The following persons shall serve as ex-officio nonvoting
30 members on the commission: (A) The Commissioners of Higher
31 Education, Education, Economic and Community Development, and
32 the Labor Commissioner, or their designees; (B) the chairpersons of the
33 boards of trustees and the chief executive officers of each constituent
34 unit of the state system of higher education, or their designees; (C) the
35 chairperson of the board and president of the Connecticut Conference
36 of Independent Colleges, or their designees; (D) the director of the
37 Office of Workforce Competitiveness, or the director's designee; and
38 (E) the chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing
39 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
40 relating to higher education and employment advancement.

41 (3) The commission shall elect a chairperson at its first meeting. Any
42 vacancies shall be filled by the appointing authority. The commission
43 members shall serve without compensation except for necessary
44 expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. The commission
45 may seek the advice and participation of any person, organization or
46 state or federal agency it deems necessary to carry out the provisions
47 of this section. The commission may, within available appropriations,
48 retain consultants to assist in carrying out its duties. The commission
49 may receive funds from any public or private sources to carry out its
50 activities.

51 (b) The commission shall develop a strategic master plan that
52 promotes the following overall goals for higher education in this state:

53 (A) Ensure equal access and opportunity to post-secondary education
54 for all state residents, (B) promote student achievement, including
55 student performance, retention and graduation, (C) promote economic
56 competitiveness in the state, (D) improve access to higher education
57 for minorities and nontraditional students, including, but not limited
58 to, part-time students, incumbent workers, adult learners, former
59 inmates and immigrants, and (E) ensure the state's obligation to
60 provide adequate funding for higher education.

61 (c) The commission shall:

62 (1) Examine the impact of demographics and workforce trends on
63 higher education in the state;

64 (2) Address the problems identified in demographic forecasts,
65 including, but not limited to, the decrease in the number of young
66 people in the state earning a bachelor's degree, the decrease in the
67 number of young people entering the state's workforce and the
68 increasingly widening achievement gap among minority students;

69 (3) Develop and implement a strategic master plan for higher
70 education that identifies specific short-term and long-term goals for
71 the state and includes benchmarks for achieving those goals by 2010,
72 2015 and 2020;

73 (4) Examine funding policies for higher education including
74 coordination of appropriation, tuition and financial aid and seek ways
75 to maximize funding through federal and private grants; and

76 (5) Submit a biennium report prepared by the Department of Higher
77 Education to the Governor and the General Assembly on the progress
78 made toward achieving the benchmarks established in the strategic
79 plan.

80 (d) In developing the strategic master plan, the commission shall
81 review the plans pursuant to sections 10a-6 and 10a-11 of the general
82 statutes and the report titled "New England 2020: A Forecast of

83 Educational Attainment and its Implications for the Workforce of New
84 England States" prepared by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation. In
85 addition, the commission may consider the following: (1) Establishing
86 incentives for institutional performance and productivity; (2)
87 increasing financial aid incentive programs, especially in workforce
88 shortage areas and for minority students; (3) implementing mandatory
89 college preparatory curricula in high schools and aligning such
90 curricula with curricula in institutions of higher education; (4) seeking
91 partnerships with the business community and public institutions of
92 higher education to serve the needs of workforce retraining that may
93 include bridge programs in which businesses work directly with
94 higher education institutions to move students into identified
95 workforce shortage areas; (5) establishing collaborative partnerships
96 between public high schools and institutions of higher education; (6)
97 implementing programs in high school to assist high school students
98 seeking a college track or alternative pathways for post-secondary
99 educations, such as vocational and technical opportunities; (7)
100 developing policies to promote and measure retention and graduation
101 rates of students; (8) addressing the educational needs of minority
102 students and nontraditional students, including, but not limited to,
103 part-time students, incumbent workers, adult learners, former inmates
104 and immigrants, in order to increase enrollment and retention in
105 institutions of higher education; and (9) addressing the affordability of
106 tuition at institutions of higher education and the issue of increased
107 student indebtedness.

108 (e) Not later than October 1, 2008, the commission shall submit the
109 strategic master plan, including specific goals and benchmarks for the
110 years ending 2010, 2015 and 2020, together with any recommendations
111 for appropriate legislation and funding to the Governor and the joint
112 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of
113 matters relating to higher education and employment advancement,
114 education, commerce, labor and appropriations, in accordance with
115 section 11-4a of the general statutes.

116 (f) On or before January 1, 2009, and biennially thereafter, until

117 January 1, 2021, the commission shall submit a report, prepared by the
 118 Department of Higher Education, to the Governor and the joint
 119 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of
 120 matters relating to higher education and employment advancement,
 121 education, commerce, labor and appropriations, in accordance with
 122 section 11-4a of the general statutes, on the implementation of the plan
 123 and progress made toward achieving the goals specified in the plan.

124 (g) The commission shall terminate on January 1, 2021.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2007	New section

HED *Joint Favorable Subst. C/R* APP

APP *Joint Favorable Subst.*

LM *Joint Favorable*

GAE *Joint Favorable*